

Conference on Disarmament

19 February 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 19 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Conference on Disarmament addressed to the Secretary-General of the Conference transmitting a draft decision for the Conference to establish a formal working group and an associated programme of work for the duration of the 2016 session

I hereby have the honour to transmit a draft decision for the Conference on Disarmament to establish a formal working group and an associated programme of work for the duration of the 2016 session.

I will introduce this draft at the next formal plenary session but in the meantime I would be grateful if you could issue and circulate this draft decision to all members of the Conference as an official document of the Conference in the hope that the incoming President of the Conference will take forward consultations on this draft and be in a position to submit it for action in the very near future.

(Signed) Matthew Rowland
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
to the Conference on Disarmament

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Draft Proposal for a programme of work for 2016

The Conference on Disarmament,

Convinced that, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community, it has the primary role in substantive negotiations on priority questions of disarmament,

Recognizing the need to conduct multilateral negotiations with the aim of reaching agreement on concrete issues to reinforce the international security environment and architecture,

Taking into consideration the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which recognised that all the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations, and that, consequently, all States have the duty to contribute to efforts in the field of disarmament, and that while disarmament is the responsibility of all States, the nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament; and that the adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner, taking into account all factors that could affect global strategic stability, so as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage,

Recalling, in this respect, that the Conference has a number of urgent and important issues on its agenda¹ for negotiation to achieve disarmament goals,

Cognisant that the examination of items on the Conference's agenda can be considered in the absence of a decision on substance as provided in the rules of procedure and highlighted in CD/2033² adopted by consensus,

Determined to pursue all items on its agenda in a balanced and comprehensive manner, without prejudice to any, in accordance with and fully respecting its rules of procedure, and given the mandate conferred to the Conference on Disarmament by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, decides:

1. *To establish* a working group and associated programme of work for the duration of the 2016 session to identify, elaborate and recommend effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons; the legal provisions could be established through various approaches, including a stand-alone instrument or a framework agreement.
2. *The working group shall be chaired* by Mr. Matthew Rowland, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Conference on Disarmament [and co-chaired by....]
3. *The Working Group shall remain open* to all member States of the Conference on Disarmament and to those interested non-member States that the Conference has invited to participate in its work during the 2016 session, in accordance with the rules of procedure of

¹ CD/2052 adopted at the 1371st plenary meeting on 26 January 2016.

² Final report of the work of the Informal Working Group re-established pursuant to rule 23 of its rules of procedures, with a mandate to produce a programme of work robust in substance and progressive over time in implementation, adopted at the 1363rd plenary meeting on 17 August 2015.

the Conference and the decision taken at its 1990 session on its improved and effective functioning (CD/1036).

4. *The Working Group shall continue* to use the rules of procedure of the Conference, *mutatis mutandis*.

5. *The Working Group shall present* a report to the Conference on its progress before the end of the fifth presidency of the current session.

6. *In accordance with the rules of procedure*, the Working Group will hold plenary sessions under the following indicative schedule cognisant of the need for general plenary meetings and meetings of regional groups:

First part

[President: Norway]

23 February	General plenary.
29 February – 4 March	High level segment.
8 March	General plenary.
9 March pm – 11 March	Identification of effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.
15 March	General plenary.
16 March pm – 18 March	Identification of effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

[President: Pakistan]

22 March	General plenary.
23 March pm – 25 March	Identification of effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.
29 March	General plenary.
30 March pm - 31 March	Identification of effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons identified for possible elaboration.
1 April	Civil society addresses and debate.

Second part

17 May

General plenary.

18 May pm – 20 May

Elaboration of identified effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

24 May

General plenary.

25 May pm – 27 May

Elaboration of identified effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

[President: Peru]

31 May

General plenary.

1 June pm – 3 June

Elaboration of identified effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

7 June

General plenary.

8 June pm – 10 June

Elaboration of identified effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

14 June

General plenary.

15 June pm – 17 June

Elaboration of identified effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

21 June

General plenary.

[President: Poland]

28 June

General plenary

29 June pm – 30 June

Recommendations of the working group on effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

1 July

Civil society addresses and debate.

Third part

2 August	General plenary.
3 August pm – 5 August	Recommendations of the working group on effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.
9 August	General plenary.
16 August	General plenary.
17 August pm – 18 August	Recommendations of the working group on effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.
19 August	Conclusions of the working group and report back to the Conference by its Chairs.

[President: Republic of Korea]

23 August	General plenary.
26 August	Civil society addresses and debate.
29 August – 2 September	Final statements, consideration of the report of the Conference on Disarmament.
5 – 9 September	Final statements, consideration of the report of the Conference on Disarmament.
12 – 16 September	Final statements, consideration and adoption of the report of the Conference on Disarmament.

7. Should member States agree by consensus to negotiate a multilateral legal arrangement on any issue on the agenda of the Conference during the course of the 2016 session, the Conference should establish, in accordance with rule 23, a separate subsidiary body for the subsequent negotiation of that issue.

8. In adopting this programme of work, the Conference has kept in mind the provisions of rules 30 and 31 of its rules of procedure.